

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OPERATIONS BRIEFINGS

BRIEFINGS

The purpose of a briefing and the desired response or result determines the briefing technique. Basically, there are four briefing types: the information briefing, the decision briefing, the mission briefing, and the staff briefing.

The Information Briefing. The information briefing informs the listener and deals primarily with facts and background information. The Information Briefing contains an introduction to the subject and the scope of the subject area. It then presents the high-priority information requiring immediate attention and complex information involving complicated plans, systems, statistics, or charts. It may also explain controversial situations or information, which require elaboration.

The Decision Briefing. The Decision Briefing includes many of the elements of the information, but goes further by seeking a decision from the decision-maker. At the beginning, the briefer clearly states that he is seeking a decision; at the end, he requests the decision.

The Mission Briefing. The Mission Briefing gives special instructions, amplifies the mission, elaborates on new orders, or assigns taskings to subordinate elements. This briefing usually follows the five-paragraph operations order format. But the briefer may also choose the information briefing format.

The Staff Briefing. The Staff Briefing informs the commander and staff of the current operational situation. Its purpose is to generate a coordinated or unified effort and in a tactical environment. It serves to keep the entire staff aware of each section's activities, thus aiding coordinated action. While there is no specific briefing format, commanders usually tailor this type of briefing to fit their information needs. PAOs address the major PA activities and the PA implications of the operational situation and other staff sections activities.

In a commander's staff briefing, the PAO is responsible for providing a summary of the "global information environment (GIE)." The PAO should present this information at the beginning of the briefing, following the intelligence summary. The PAO's GIE summary, combined with the G2/S2's intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) briefing, helps to complete the picture of the operational situation, which the other elements of the command must react.

Preparation. After conducting the initial analysis of the situation, the briefer gathers and organizes information, prepares visual aids, and then rehearses, briefing only what is essential. Before developing the briefing, the briefing officer or NCO must know and understand:

- the higher headquarters mission
- the higher commander's intent
- the commander's personal guidance and intent
- all aspects of the PA estimate of the situation
- the command's objectives

While much of the information required for a GIE presentation can be found in previously published PA Area Studies, a significant amount of situational information should be pulled directly from the PA Estimate of the Situation and updated to present the latest information available.

BRIEFING FORMAT

The PA briefing format should follow an outline similar to the PA Estimate of the Situation:

- Mission - Command mission including PA objectives
- Situation and Conditions
- Information environment
- PA situation
- Media presence
- Media capabilities
- Media content
- Public opinion
- Information channel availability
- Information needs
- Current Operations/Actions
- Future Operations/Actions